

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 6-12 are now pending in this application for which applicant seeks reconsideration.

Amendment

Independent claims 1, 10, and 11 have been amended to clarify that the term "greater" emphasizes "rendering." In other words, these claims call for rendering a greater moving amount of the focus lens corresponding to the detected operation amount when the present state of the focus lens is in a first depth of focus than when the present state of the focus lens is in a second depth of focus. Applicant submits that no substantive change to these claims has been made. Rather, the changes merely relate to improving readability. No new matter has been introduced.

Art Rejection

Claims 1, 6, 8, 10, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Hirasawa (USP 5,315,340), and claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Hirasawa. Claims 2 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Hirasawa in view of Norita (USP 6,906,751). Claim 7 was rejected under § 103(a) as unpatentable over Hirasawa in view of Okawara (USPGP 2002/0041334). Lastly, claim 9 was rejected under § 103(a) as unpatentable over Hirasawa in view of applicant's admitted prior art (AAPA). Applicant traverses these rejections because

Applicant previously explained that the previously applied references failed to disclose or teach determining the movement amount of the focusing motor M2 corresponding to the operation amount based on the present depth of focus. In response, the examiner asserts that independent claims 1, 10, and 11 do not recite varying the focusing sensitivity based on the depth of field (the claims use the term "focus").

Applicant disagrees with the examiner's assessment because previously presented independent claims 1, 10, and 11 called for rendering the moving amount of the focus lens corresponding to the detected operation amount when the present state of the focus lens is in a first depth of focus **greater** than when the present state of the focus lens is in a second depth of focus. Note that the term greater has been moved near the term "render" or "rendering" in the present amendment for added readability without altering the scope of the claims.

Applicant submits that the above feature indeed calls for changing the focusing sensitivity depending on the depth of focus since the rendering is greater in the first depth of focus than the second depth of focus.

Applicant submits that Hirasawa does not disclose changing the focusing sensitivity depending on the depth of focus (or field as argued), as set forth in independent claims 1, 10, and 11. Accordingly, the combination urged by the examiner would not have taught the claimed invention.

Conclusion

Applicant submits that claims 1-3 and 6-12 are in condition for allowance. Should the examiner have any issues concerning this reply or any other outstanding issues remaining in this application, applicant urges the examiner to contact the undersigned to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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DATE

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